

SMITH of Washington changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1730

#### PERMISSION TO CONSIDER MEMBER AS FIRST SPONSOR OF H.R. 2009

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I may hereafter be considered as the first sponsor of H.R. 2009, a bill initially introduced by former Representative Capps of California, for the purposes of adding cosponsors and requesting reprintings pursuant to clause 4 of rule XXII.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CALVERT). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

#### POLITICAL FREEDOM IN CHINA ACT OF 1997

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 302, and as the designee of the chairman of the Committee on International Relations, I call up the bill (H.R. 2358) to provide for improved monitoring of human rights violations in the People's Republic of China, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill is considered read for amendment.

The text of H.R. 2358 is as follows:

H.R. 2358

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Political Freedom in China Act of 1997".

#### SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Congress concurs in the following conclusions of the United States Department on human rights in the People's Republic of China in 1996:

(A) The People's Republic of China is "an authoritarian state" in which "citizens lack the freedom to peacefully express opposition to the party-led political system and the right to change their national leaders or form of government".

(B) The Government of the People's Republic of China has "continued to commit widespread and well documented human rights abuses, in violation of internationally accepted norms, stemming from the authorities' intolerance of dissent, fear of unrest, and the absence or inadequacy of laws protecting basic freedoms".

(C) "[a]buses include torture and mistreatment of prisoners, forced confessions, and arbitrary and incommunicado detention".

(D) "[p]rison conditions remained harsh [and] [t]he Government continued severe restrictions on freedom of speech, the press, assembly, association, religion, privacy, and worker rights".

(E) "[a]lthough the Government denies that it holds political prisoners, the number of persons detained or serving sentences for

'counterrevolutionary crimes' or 'crimes against the state' and for peaceful political or religious activities are believed to number in the thousands".

(F) "[n]on-approved religious groups, including Protestant and Catholic groups . . . experienced intensified repression".

(G) "[s]erious human rights abuses persist in minority areas, including Tibet, Xinjiang, and Inner Mongolia, and [c]ontrols on religion and other fundamental freedoms in these areas have also intensified".

(H) "[o]verall in 1996, the authorities stepped up efforts to cut off expressions of protest or criticism. All public dissent against the party and government was effectively silenced by intimidation, exile, the imposition of prison terms, administrative detention, or house arrest. No residents were known to be active at year's end."

(2) In addition to the State Department, credible independent human rights organizations have documented an increase in repression in China during 1996, and effective destruction of the dissident movement through the arrest and sentencing of the few remaining pro-democracy and human rights activists not already in prison or exile.

(3) Among those were Wang Dan, a student leader of the 1989 pro-democracy protests, sentenced on October 30, 1996, to 11 years in prison on charges of conspiring to subvert the Government; Li Hai, sentenced to 9 years in prison on December 18, 1996, for gathering information on the victims of the 1989 crackdown, which according to the court's verdict constituted "state secrets"; and Liu Nianchun, an independent labor organizer, sentenced to 3 years of "re-education through labor" on July 4, 1996, due to his activities in connection with a petition campaign calling for human rights reforms.

(4) Many political prisoners are suffering from poor conditions and ill-treatment leading to serious medical and health problems, including—

(A) Wei Jingsheng, sentenced to 14 years in prison on December 13, 1996, for conspiring to subvert the government and for "communication with hostile foreign organizations and individuals, amassing funds in preparation for overthrowing the government and publishing anti-government articles abroad," is currently held in Jile No. 1 Prison (formerly the Nanpu New Life Salt Farm) in Hebei province, where he reportedly suffers from severe high blood pressure and a heart condition, worsened by poor conditions of confinement;

(B) Gao Yu, a journalist sentenced to 6 years in prison on November 1994 and honored by UNESCO in May 1997, has a heart condition; and

(C) Chen Longde, a leading human rights advocate now serving a 3-year reeducation through labor sentence imposed without trial in August 1995, has reportedly been subject to repeated beatings and electric shocks at a labor camp for refusing to confess his guilt.

(5) In 1997, only 1 official in the United States Embassy in Beijing is assigned to human monitoring human rights in the People's Republic of China, and no officials are assigned to monitor human rights in United States consulates in the People's Republic of China.

#### SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL AT DIPLOMATIC POSTS TO MONITOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA.

There are authorized to be appropriated to support personnel to monitor political repression in the People's Republic of China in the United States Embassy in Beijing, as well as the American consulates in Guangzhou, Shanghai, Shenyang, Chengdu,

and Hong Kong, \$2,200,000 for fiscal years 1998 and \$2,200,000 for fiscal year 1999.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 302, the amendments printed in the bill and the amendments printed in part 1-A of House Report 105-336 are adopted.

The text of H.R. 2358, as amended pursuant to House Resolution 302, is as follows:

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